

AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOMETRIC
ERRORS IN PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

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ABSTRACT
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An Exploratory Analysis of Psychometric Errors in Performance Appraisals

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The significance of this degree paper is to identify ways in which psychometric errors can be minimized in performance appraisals. Psychometric errors are of five major types: halo effect, error of leniency, error of strictness, error of central tendency and recency of events errors. Performance appraisals are of several types and they can be classified as subjective or objective. It was once thought that the design of the performance appraisal could eliminate errors. Information in the Review of Literature proves otherwise. Although certain appraisal formats are more effective in reducing psychometric errors than are others, bias is still present in them. This requires the implementation and utilization of rater training programs to control the presence of these errors. There are four major types of rater training programs. They are workshops, group discussion, scale construction, and frame-of-reference training.

Workshops and group discussions focus on tactics of gathering information and sampling behaviors. Scale construction training is a

type of training program whereby raters fully participate in constructing the scales that they will use later. Frame-of-reference training is designed to reduce arbitrary performance standards by having raters discuss their own standards in comparison with the normative standards. These rater training programs have been offered as the most effective way to reduce psychometric errors.

The writer used descriptive analysis as well as participant observation to assess the problem of psychometric errors and to demonstrate the effectiveness of rater training programs.

I. INTRODUCTION

There is an increase in the demands for quality goods and services by the public. These demands present a challenge to public employees. These challenges are to identify the means by which quality goods and services can be provided in the most efficient way. The key word here is efficiency. In order for agencies to carry out critical functions, they must have competent employees. Similarly, competency is viewed from the perspective of having the ability to fully meet critical functions successfully. In most organizations, competency is measured by use of performance appraisals.

Performance appraisal is defined as a system of measuring, evaluating, and influencing an employee's job related attributes, behavior, outcomes, and levels of absenteeism to discover at what level the employee is presently performing on the job.¹

It consists of a variety of rating formats and procedures and is likewise an interpersonal process in which the manager and subordinate communicate and attempt to influence each other.² It is an important mechanism for both the organization and the individual. The organization uses it as a tool in making decisions on training needs and

¹Randall S. Schuler and A. Stuart Youngblood, Effective Personnel Management, 2nd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1986), p. 232.

²Michael Beer and Bert Spector, "Note on Performance Appraisal," Readings in Human Resource Management (New York: The Free Press, 1985), p. 313.

promotion of employees. On the other hand, it is important to the individual from the standpoint of receiving feedback about his/her performance and as a means of indicating to the employee those areas of needed improvement.

The underlying philosophy of appraisal is that people have a right to seek and receive high-quality, responsible and balanced feedback on their work performance and it is the responsibility of management to provide opportunities to discuss feedback in an objective manner.³ Hence, the rating an employee receives on a performance appraisal represents an interaction between the individual in relationship to performance and the nature and requirements of the job.⁴ Oftentimes a supervisor's personal values, opinions, and impressions will be invoked in the appraisal process. These feelings sometime replace facts resulting in errors in performance appraisals.⁵ These errors have been classified as psychometric errors.

The purpose of this degree paper is to identity ways in which psychometric errors can be minimized. Examples of psychometric errors are halo, leniency, and recency of events errors. Techniques that are used in reducing these types of errors are rater training

³Jim George, "Appraisal in the Public Sector: Dispensing with the Big Stick," Personnel Management 15 (May 1986):33.

⁴Gerald V. Barrett and C. Mary Kernan, "Performance Appraisal and Terminations: A Review of Court Decisions Since Brito v. Zia with Implications for Personnel Practices." Personnel Psychology 40 (Augumn 1987):489.

⁵Jerry W. Johnson, "Some Psychological Aspects of Employee Evaluation," Public Management (May 1987):2.

programs. The writer examines and discusses the aforementioned psychometric errors in the search for methods that will minimize their impact on performance appraisals.

II. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Agency and Unit Description

The writer served in a cooperative education program (internship) in the International Trade Administration (ITA) agency, headquartered in Washington, D.C. The International Trade Administration is responsible for most non-agricultural trade arrangements with foreign nations and works with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative in coordinating U.S. trade policy. It operates through four principal units: Trade Development, International Economic Policy, Trade Administration, and the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service (see Appendix A). The Trade Administration administers U.S. import and export laws through its Import Administration, Export Enforcement Office, and Export Administration. Within Export Administration is the Office of Export Licensing.

The Office of Export Licensing is responsible for the export of commodities or technical data for which there are strategic, short supply, or foreign policy concerns and which require formal authorization through issuance of a valid export license. The writer worked in two subdivisions within the Office of Export Licensing: First, the Review and Referral Branch, and later, the Exporter Assistance Staff (see Appendix A).

The Review and Referral Branch consists of four teams: Department of Defense Team (DOD), Department of State Team (DOS), Department of Energy Team (DOE), and Coordinating Committee team (COCOM). The DOD team has the responsibility of referring export license applications to the Department of Defense for national security purposes (i.e., the export of a commodity to a foreign country that may be a threat to U.S. national security). The DOS team is responsible for the referral of export license applications which are of foreign policy concerns to the Department of State. The DOE team is responsible for the referral of export license applications which are of nuclear concerns to the Department of Energy. Finally, the COCOM team refers export license applications to the Coordinating Committee which is an international security export system that meets in Paris to review proposed transactions to export or reexport certain strategic commodities to Soviet Bloc Countries.

The Exporter Assistance staff responds to exporter inquiries on the status of export license applications, and the administrative requirements of Export Administration. This staff also processes emergency applications and coordinates with other areas of ITA on trade fair export license requests.

The Internship Experience

The writer was initially assigned to the Office of Export Licensing, Review and Referral Branch and later assigned to the Exporter Assistance Staff. Her responsibilities while working under the DOD team, which is a subunit in Review and Referral, were the

following:

1. Analyze and prepare statistical/status reports on export license applications for the purpose of notifying advisory agencies that their license review is approaching the statutory time frames.
2. Assist in preparing a study on the level and quality of technical review currently provided by the technical staff in the Individual Valid Licensing Division (IVLD). The purpose of this study was to identify problems as well as solutions to the reason(s) or perception of why the Department of Commerce has poor quality technical review.

Other tasks that the writer performed were reviewing export license applications for approval in accordance with current U.S. and international guidelines and regulations. This entailed the evaluation of export license applications with respect to the commodity, destination, end-use/end user, strategic implications, licensing history, national security and foreign policy considerations. Additionally, the writer took on the task of reviewing interagency agreements to determine which commodities were subject to referral to other agencies based on either foreign policy, national security, or nuclear non-proliferation concerns.

Statement of the Problem

The 1978 Civil Service Reform Act delegated authority to the individual agencies to establish their own performance appraisal formats. For example, the Centers for Disease Control uses Critical Incidents as their appraisal format and the U.S. Department of Commerce uses

Behavior Anchor Scales as their appraisal format. Despite the implementation of the above mentioned act, the federal government's performance appraisal systems are not reliable due to the presence of psychometric errors in ratings. The cause of these errors is due to supervisor's lack of training in the proper techniques of appraisals. As a result, the appraisal may not truly assess an employee's performance. Hence, this inadequate assessment indirectly leads to inefficiency in most agencies because employees are not getting proper feedback about their performance.

Context of the Problem

The following reflects the nature of the problem:

In no area has the search for an effective performance appraisal system been more fervent than in the federal government. Performance appraisals in the federal government include the systematic descriptions of strengths and weaknesses within and between employees. Under pressure by citizens for public accountability, crippled by decreasing funding and increasing demands for services, faced with new policies under changing administrations, and confined by tightening government regulations, public administrators have focused in on performance appraisal as a technique to influence and control employee behavior and to increase productivity and effectiveness.⁶

Lately, administrators appear to be slightly mistrustful of performance appraisal techniques. Yet, administrators consistently contend that they are unwilling to abandon performance appraisals

⁶Vandra L. Humber, "Analysis of Performance Appraisal Practices in the Public Sector: A Review and Recommendations," Public Personnel Management 12 (Fall 1983):258.

because they view them as important assessment tools and managerial aids in certain areas.⁷ An explanation for this mistrust is that public administrators lack the ability to specify clear objectives and performance measures for their employee. This is a reflection of administrators not receiving adequate training in performance.⁸ Additionally, performance appraisal systems have relied upon subjective rather than objective measures of performance. This is because supervisors create a problem when "they allow personal values, needs, or biases to replace organizational standards."⁹

⁷Ibid., p. 261.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Schuler and Youngblood, Effective Personnel Management, p. 251.

III. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 is legislation which was enacted during the Carter Administration. It was enacted to create a legal framework for rules and procedures which would improve the performance of federal civilian employees, thus improving government effectiveness. It was signed into law on October 15, 1978.¹⁰

Prior to that time, adjective ratings were used to rate federal employees. It was believed that these adjective ratings did not accurately recognize good performance nor that good performance would lead to promotions or rewards.¹¹ The following excerpt reflects the nature of the problems prior to the passage of the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act:

Studies by the Civil Service Commission as well as comments from managers and employees clearly establish that performance ratings are often ineffective in improving the quality of performance and appraisal feedback. Some of the causes for the failure of the current system are: restrictive features of adjective summary ratings, lack of clear and concise job-related performance requirements, and an apparent lack of support by some managers and supervisors for the performance evaluation program. The net result of these problems is that approximately 99

¹⁰ Steven Knudsen, Larry Jakus, and Maida Meta, "The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978," Personnel Management 8 (May-June 1979): 170.

¹¹ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, Civil Service Reform Oversight, 96th Cong., d sess., 1980, p. 22.

percent of all federal employees receive satisfactory performance ratings each year.¹²

The Civil Service Reform Act mandated accountability in the job appraisal system and eliminated the government-wide use of subjective adjective ratings of "outstanding," "satisfactory," and "unsatisfactory" and gave each federal agency considerable flexibility in developing its own performance appraisal system.¹³ Whitbeck summarizes the minimum requirement for federal agency appraisal systems in the following excerpt:

The systems are to form the basis for decisions to train, reward, assign, promote, demote, retain, or remove employees. Specifically, appraisal systems must make it possible for agencies to:

- a. advise employees on the critical elements of their jobs;
- b. establish performance standards that will permit accurate evaluation of performance based on objective job-related standards;
- c. assist employees to improve their performance when it is found to be unacceptable, but only after they had the opportunity to show improvement. Finally, the 1978 legislation specifically encourages employee participation in establishing performance standards.¹⁴

In recent years, widespread attention has been paid to the role of performance appraisal as a critical tool in human resource

¹²Huber, "Analysis of Performance Appraisal Practices in the Public Sector: A Review and Recommendations," p. 260.

¹³Schuler and Youngblood, Effective Personnel Management, p. 237.

¹⁴Philip Whitbeck, "A Critique on the Theme of Change in Performance Appraisal," Public Personnel Management 11 (Fall 1982); 341.

management throughout public and private organizations. Performance appraisal is an important management tool because it assists organizations in achieving their goals and objectives and most importantly, assist in the development of employees. This heightened interest is evidenced by the large number of publications, both academic and practitioner-oriented, that deal exclusively with the issue.¹⁵ The performance appraisal process begins with the supervisors and employees discussing job responsibilities, objectives, and method of evaluation. The agreed upon goals are then formalized into a work plan to be accomplished by the end of the review cycle.¹⁶

Performance appraisals are of two general types: objective and subjective. Objective appraisals basically include production data, such as quantity output, and personnel data such as accidents, turnover, absences and tardiness. The advantage of objective appraisals is that they minimize most types of psychometric errors better than subjective appraisals. A disadvantage of objective appraisals is that an individual's performance may be judged on factors beyond his/her control. Direct Index is an example of an objective appraisal format. This is a type of format where the employee is compared by the supervisor in terms of objective measures of productivity such

¹⁵Luis R. Gomez-Mejia, Ronald C. Page and Walter W. Tornov, "Improving the Effectiveness of Performance Appraisal," The Personnel Administrator 30 (January 1985):74.

¹⁶Ibid.

as the quantity of output.¹⁷

By contrast, subjective appraisals of performance may be relative, i.e., comparisons are made among a group of ratees or they may be absolute. Absolute rating systems enable a rater to describe a ratee without making direct reference to other ratees. Most organizations use subjective appraisals in evaluating employee's performance. There are eight types of subjective appraisal formats.¹⁸

First among them is the Employee Comparison Method. This is a type of appraisal format where the supervisor ranks the employees in terms of their worth to the organization. It has been found that the employee comparison method effectively controls leniency, severity, and central tendency errors. Yet, it does not control halo errors.¹⁹

A second type of appraisal format is Management by Objectives. It is a method which is widely used to evaluate managers. In this type of format, the employee's measure of performance is based on the number of accomplished objectives that were agreed upon by the employees and the superiors. This method "encourages greater individual-organizational goal congruence and reduces the likelihood that managers will focus on things unrelated to the objectives and purposes of the

¹⁷ Bruce McAfee and Blake Green, "Selecting A Performance Appraisal Method," The Personnel Administrator 22 (May 1977):61.

¹⁸ Wayne F. Casio, Applied Psychology in Personnel Management, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1987), p. 75.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 85

organization."²⁰ It also has been found to control leniency and strictness errors. A disadvantage of management by Objectives is that, in evaluating managers, it is not always possible to capture all the important dimensions of a job in terms of output.²¹

A third type of format is a Weighted Checklist. With this type of format, the rater is provided with a series of descriptive statements that describe the ratee in question. Moreover, it has been reported that ratings which are descriptive are more likely to be higher in reliability than ratings that are evaluative.²²

The fourth type of appraisal format is the Forced Choice Checklist. The Forced Choice Checklist puts the supervisor in the position of choosing between several equally favorable or equally unfavorable statements that best and/or least describes the employee's behavior. The Forced-Choice Checklist is a technique developed specifically to reduce leniency errors and to establish objective standards of comparison between individuals. The main advantage claimed for forced choice scales is that a rater cannot distort employees' ratings higher or lower than is warranted since he/she has no way of knowing which statements to check in order to do so.²³ A

²⁰Schuler and Youngblood, Effective Personnel Management, p. 246.

²¹Ibid.

²²McAfee and Green, "Selecting A Performance Appraisal Method," p. 61.

²³Casio, Applied Psychology in Personnel Management, p. 87.

disadvantage of the Forced Choice Checklist is that the raters are essentially unaware of how the ratings of their subordinates are interpreted. This not only makes feedback difficult, it also reduces the trust the rater has for the organization.²⁴

The fifth type of appraisal format is Forced Distribution. Forced Distribution is a type of appraisal format in which a certain percentage of the employees must be rated outstanding, fair, and poor. The primary advantage of forced distribution is that it controls leniency, severity, and central tendency errors rather effectively, but it assumes that ratees conform to a normal distribution.²⁵

Critical Incidents is the sixth type of appraisal format. Critical Incidents are simply reports by knowledgeable observers of actions the employee took which were especially effective or ineffective in accomplishing parts of their job.²⁶ An advantage of this approach is that:

... it increases the chances that the subordinates will improve because they learn more precisely what is expected. A drawback of this approach is the time consuming aspect of recordkeeping for each subordinate.²⁷

The Narrative Essay is the seventh type of appraisal format. A Narrative Essay is a format which is utilized for the purpose of

²⁴Schuler and Youngblood, Effective Personnel Management, p. 87.

²⁵Casio, Applied Psychology in Personnel Management, p. 85.

²⁶Ibid., p. 87.

²⁷Schuler and Youngblood, Effective Personnel Management, p. 240.

asking the supervisor to write an essay describing the employee's performance without being told as to what dimensions or criteria to use.²⁸ The advantage of using the Narrative Essay is that it enables the supervisor to describe the employee's strengths and weaknesses as well as identify the ways in which these weaknesses can be improved. A disadvantage of this technique is that it provides only qualitative data, thus making it difficult to make managerial decisions.²⁹

The eighth type of appraisal format is the Graphic Rating Scale. The Graphic Rating Scale is the most widely used format of performance appraisals. Graphic rating scales differ in three ways:

1. The degree to which the meaning of the response categories is defined;
2. The degree to which the individual who is interpreting the ratings can tell clearly what response was intended;
3. The degree to which the performance dimension being rated is defined for the rater.

On a graphic rating scale, each point is defined on a continuum. Hence, in order to make meaningful distinctions of performance within dimensions, scale points must be defined unambiguously for the rater. This process is called anchoring. Anchors can be qualitative, numerical, and verbal.³⁰

²⁸McAfee and Green, "Selecting A Performance Appraisal Method," p. 61.

²⁹Schuler and Youngblood, Effective Personnel Management, p. 240.

³⁰Casio, Applied Psychology in Personnel Management, p. 91.

There are three variations of graphic rating scales: mixed standard scales, behavior anchored scales and behavior observation scales. Mixed Standard Scales are designed specifically to minimize halo and leniency errors. However, they do not minimize other types of errors.³¹

The second type of graphic rating scale is the Behavior Anchored Rating Scale (BARS). Behavior Anchored Rating Scale is a format whereby typically the employee is evaluated in many dimensions. The anchors however, constitute specific job behaviors. The impact of BARS on the reduction of psychometric errors is not superior to other formats as was once thought. It basically reduces leniency and strictness errors.³²

The third type of graphic rating scale is the Behavior Observation Rating Scale (BOS). Like Behavior Anchored Rating Scales, Behavior Observation Scales consist of clusters of behavioral statements that all describe the same aspect of performance. Unlike BARS however, each statement in BOS represents a high level of performance. The rater's task is simply to estimate the frequency with which he/she has observed each behavior. Psychometrically, BOS is similar to BARS in all other respects.³³ Many organizations use a combination of these formats since some formats are more susceptible to errors than are others.

³¹Ibid., p. 92

³²Ibid., p. 96.

³³Ibid., p. 97.

The use of the several types of appraisal instruments, as was described above, results in numerous problems of psychometric errors in the performance appraisal process. These psychometric errors are of five major types: halo error, error of leniency, error of strictness, error of central tendency, and recency of events errors.³⁴

A halo error is committed when a rater evaluates a subordinate similarly on all dimensions of performance using as a basis a single dimension. Halo error is perhaps the most pervasive error in performance appraisal. In an effort to minimize it, numerous rating methods, instrument formats, rater training techniques, and statistical controls have been developed. When raters tend to give all their subordinates favorable ratings, they are committing an error of leniency. An error of strictness is to the opposite extreme.³⁵ Leniency and strictness errors can be controlled or eliminated in two ways: one, by allocating ratings into a forced distribution, in which ratees are apportioned according to an approximately normal distribution; two, by reducing ambiguity in the rating scales themselves. This is done by improving the definitions of the dimensions and also by providing anchors for the various scale points.³⁶

An error of central tendency evaluates all subordinates as average. Central tendency errors can be minimized by specifying

³⁴Schuler and Youngblood, Effective Personnel Management, p. 251.

³⁵Casio, Applied Psychology in Personnel Management, p. 84.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 83.

clearly what they mean in instances where anchors are used. A recency-of-events error tends to evaluate total performance on the basis of the most recent behavior.³⁷

Some researchers have implied that these errors are a result of both the appraisal format and the lack of rater training. However, other researchers suggest that there is a strong indication that ratings are as much or more a function of the idiosyncrasies of the rater who made them than they are of the actual behavior of the ratees.³⁸ Furthermore, reports submitted on employees reflect primarily the strengths and weaknesses of the rater. Again, the impact of this factor substantially limits the validity and use of any individual performance appraisal. Supervisors are often not sure of what is really being rated, whether it is their subordinate's work performance, or their own writing ability.³⁹ These problems have led researcher to call for the development of rater training programs to improve the quality of performance evaluations.⁴⁰ Raters need training and support in developing the skills and techniques of appraisal interviews. They need to develop confidence in being able

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸H. John Bernardin and Robert L. Cardy, "Appraisal Accuracy: The Ability and Motivation to Remember the Past," Public Personnel Management 11 (Fall 1982):352.

³⁹Albert C. Hyde, "Performance Appraisal in the Post Reform Era," Public Personnel Management 11 (Fall 1982):294.

⁴⁰Elaine D. Pulakos, "A Comparison of Rater Training Programs: Error Training and Accuracy Training," Journal of Applied Psychology 69 (April 1984):581.

to give and receive feedback. Training programs must address the complexities of managerial roles and take account of research evidence about style and behavior which are associated with successful practice.⁴¹

Hyde and Smith support this general recognition and furthermore state that:

Many of the short-comings of performance evaluation systems can be rectified by designing training programs that prepare the organization, the raters, and the ratees for new processes.⁴²

Most of the rater training programs that have been researched have two implicit goals: (a) to enhance raters' knowledge and skills for carrying out subjective evaluations, and (b) to motivate raters to use the skills and knowledge that they presumably will have acquired in the training program.⁴³

Based on the review of literature, there are only a few studies available that have examined the effects of training on rating over time. Moreover, most training programs to date have been successful in reducing psychometric errors-mainly halo and leniency

⁴¹George, "Appraisal in the Public Sector: Dispensing with the Big Stick," p. 34.

⁴²Albert C. Hyde and Melanie A. Smith, "Performance Appraisal and Training: Objectives, A Model for Change, and A Note of Rebuttal," Public Personnel Management 11 (Fall 1982):358.

⁴³Robert M. McIntyre, David E. Smith and Catherine E. Hassett, "Accuracy of Performance Rating as Affected by Rater Training and Perceived Purpose of Rating," Journal of Applied Psychology 69 (January 1984):147.

errors and occasionally recency-of-events errors.⁴⁴ For example, one empirical study investigated the effects of rater training and diary keeping on leniency and halo errors. The results indicated that there were significantly less errors in the group receiving total training than those receiving informal training.⁴⁵

Another study suggested that the more intense training program designed specifically to reduce halo and leniency errors will result in less psychometric errors among raters than the less intense training programs of the no-training comparison group.⁴⁶ Hence, the longer and more intense the training period, the less likely the rater will commit a psychometric error.

Additionally, Landy and Farr have reported the general conclusion that, rater training has generally been shown to be effective in reducing psychometric errors, especially if the training is extensive and allows for rater practice.⁴⁷ However, Bormon reports that other psychometric errors persist despite the training or even that other errors are exacerbated by training.⁴⁸

⁴⁴Pulakos, "A Comparison of Rater Training Program: Error Training and Accuracy Training," p. 582.

⁴⁵John M. Ivanevich, "Longitudinal Study of the Effects of Rater Training on Psychometric Error in Ratings," Journal of Applied Psychology 64 (May 1979):503.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Frank J. Landy and James L. Farr, "Performance Rating," Psychological Bulletin 87 (January 1980):91.

⁴⁸Walter C. Bormon, "Format and Training Effects on Rating Accuracy and Rater Errors," Journal of Applied Psychology 64 (April 1979):410.

As has been noted, performance appraisal in general is a complex process. Lack of objectivity, recency and halo errors, lack of standardization, rater biases, situational factors, and non performance variables such as age, salary, sex and race all cause difficulties in the appraisal process.⁴⁹ In addition, the presence of psychometric errors in performance appraisals can be counterproductive and may lead to decreased employee morale and motivation to excel in their performance. Therefore, the challenge lies in moving from a system which is potentially unfair and subjective to a system which would be predominantly fair and equitable to all employees. It is not guaranteed that an employee evaluation system can be created that is totally fair, equitable, objective, and open, but at least subjectiveness, unfairness and inequality can be minimized through careful planning and use of effective training programs for appraisers.⁵⁰

⁴⁹Huber, "A Analysis of Performance Appraisal Practice in the Public Sector: A Review and Recommendations," 259.

⁵⁰Johnson, "Some Psychological Aspects of Employee Evaluation," p. 2.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The writer utilized both the descriptive analytical approach and participant observation to assess the problem of psychometric errors in performance appraisals. Descriptive analysis serves the purpose of assessing the characteristics of a given situation. It is limited to an accurate portrayal of surface factors in the situation being investigated. Descriptive analysis is oriented towards finding out the following:

1. What is occurring?
2. Why is it occurring?
3. What can be done about it?

The descriptive analytical approach as a method is especially appropriate for this study because it serves the writer's purpose to, (1) identify the ways in which psychometric errors can be minimized in performance appraisals, (2) descriptive analysis is not limited to just one method of data collection, unlike some other types of methodologies, and (3) descriptive analysis employs any or a combination of methods of data collection.

The primary source of data was obtained via participant observation. Participant observation as applied in this paper results from the writer's participation in a performance appraisal review during the course of her internship. It should be noted that the writer's experience as described in the analysis section of this

paper, is an isolated case and not a reflection of all performance appraisals. However, it is intended to demonstrate how errors in performance appraisals can be a reflection of the rater and not the appraisal instrument.

V. ANALYSIS

Regardless of the type of appraisal format, psychometric errors will exist in the performance appraisal process. To emphasize this point, the writer relates her performance appraisal experience at ITA as well as analyzes other problems that exist in performance appraisals as indicated in the literature review section of this paper.

As was mentioned in the literature review, the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act delegated the authority to the individual agencies to establish their own performance appraisal systems. The type of appraisal format which ITA uses to evaluate employees can be categorized as a behavior anchor scale. The anchors that are used are "outstanding," "commendable," "fully successful," "marginal," and "unsatisfactory."

A rating of outstanding means that this is a level of rare, high quality performance. The quality and quantity of the employee's work substantially exceeds "fully successful" standards and rarely leaves room for improvement. The impact of the employee's work is of such significance that organizational objectives were accomplished that otherwise would not have been. The accuracy and thoroughness of the employee's work on this anchor are exceptionally reliable. Application of technical knowledge and skills goes beyond that expected for the position. The employee significantly improves the work

process and products for which he/she is responsible.

A rating of commendable is a level of unusually good performance. The quantity and quality of work under this anchor are consistently above average. Thoroughness and accuracy of work are reliable. The knowledge and skill the employee applied to this element are clearly above average, demonstrating problem-solving skill and insight into work methods and techniques. The employee follows required procedures and supervisory guidance so as to take full advantage of existing systems for accomplishing the organization's objective.

A rating of fully successful is the level of good sound performance. The quality and quantity of the employee's work under this anchor are those of a fully competent employee. The performance represents a level of accomplishment expected of the great majority of employees. The employee's work products fully meet the requirements of the anchor. Major revisions are rarely necessary; most work requires only minor revisions. Tasks are completed in an accurate, thorough, and timely fashion or manner. The employee's technical skills and knowledge are applied effectively to specific job tasks. In completing work assignments, the employee adheres to procedures and format requirements and follows necessary instructions from supervisors.

A rating of marginal means that the quantity and quality of the employee's work is at the minimum level for retention on the job and are below the level expected of most employees, and requires correction. The quantity and quality of the employee's work products

under this anchor do not consistently follow the norm of the employee's work group and assignments are not consistently completed within prescribed time frames.

Finally, a rating of unsatisfactory means that the quantity and quality of the employee's work under this element are not adequate for the position. The assignments are submitted late or often require major revision because they are incomplete or inaccurate in content. The employee fails to apply adequate knowledge to complete the work of this anchor. Either the knowledge applied cannot produce the needed products or it produces technically inadequate products or results. Lack of adherence to required procedures, instructions, or formats contribute to inadequate work products.

The intern was required to undergo two evaluations of her performance. First, at the mid-point of the co-op work cycle (internship) called a mid-progress review. The mid-progress review is usually a written summary of the performance of the intern. Second, the intern underwent a final evaluation in which the behavioral anchor scales were utilized. The final evaluation and progress review were recorded on a form called the General Workforce Performance Appraisal System (GWPAS).

As was stated earlier in the introduction, the intern was assigned to the DOD team, which is a subunit within the Review and Referral Branch. The branch chief of Review and Referral delegated authority to the DOD team group leader to do the intern's mid-progress review. At the end of the co-op cycle, the intern received an official final evaluation from the branch chief of Review and Referral, and an

unofficial final evaluation from the branch chief of the Exporter Assistance Staff (because she was later reassigned to this office). This is due to a regulation which states that whenever an intern changes offices, the supervisor in the first office does the official final evaluation. However, the supervisor in the second office may do an unofficial final evaluation which also becomes a permanent part of the intern's personnel record.

The intern requested reassignments to the Exporter Assistance Staff after she had encountered difficulties with the group leader in work related activities due to a remark which had racial overtones. The situation transpired in the following manner: The intern and the group leader met in a feedback session following the mid-progress review. In the course of the feedback session, the group leader made remarks in which she criticized the intern's performance. She stated that "the progress of the Technical Review Project was slow due to analytical and communication weaknesses," on the part of the intern. She then remarked that, "for a graduate student, the intern should not have these kinds of weaknesses," she then inquired into the intern's educational background. The intern told her that she had attended two predominately black institutions, and had majored in science at one and was studying public administration in the other. The group leader then remarked that, "the reason why the intern had poor analytical and communication skills is due to the lack of good preparation in these areas at the two black schools." The intern interpreted this remark as implying that the quality of education in black schools is inferior to the quality of education in white schools. Hence, the

intern concluded that the group leader had a bias against the intern because she attended two black institutions. However, the group leader did not reveal this bias in the written part of the mid-progress review as she had done in the oral feedback session.

The feedback session ended on a negative note with hostile and negative feelings on the part of the intern. In subsequent interactions between the intern and the group leader, these hostile and negative feelings became obvious and the group leader, sensing them, resorted to harassment of the intern in the form of insulting remarks about the intern's level of competence. The group leader continued her negative behavior toward the intern by excluding her from meetings with the group as well as other group related activities. As a result, the intern felt that she could no longer work with the group leader and trust her to make an unbiased appraisal of her performance. Therefore, the intern requested a transfer to the Exporter Assistance Staff, which was granted.

At the end of the co-op cycle (internship), the intern received favorable ratings from the two branch chiefs in the final evaluations (for details, please see Appendix B). The branch chief of the Exporter Assistance Staff appraised the intern's performance highly in the form of a written summary. The branch chief of Review and Referral ranked the performance of the intern as commendable and appraised the intern's performance highly in the "Comments" section of the GWPAS.

In the aforementioned example, one can clearly detect the presence of bias and resultant negative feelings between the appraisee and the appraiser. In this instance, there exists a stereotype which

suggests that black people who attend black institutions will not perform well on the job because they are inadequately prepared for certain job requirements due to the inferior quality of education at black institutions. The obvious bias of such implication is abundantly clear. However, one could conclude, that an individual who attends a black institution may have areas of weaknesses, but it does not suggest that those weaknesses are the result of one having attended two black institutions.

The experiences encountered by the writer as described above, suggest that the occurrence of psychometric errors often are more a reflection of the rater than the appraisal format itself. The performance review indicates that the design of the appraisal format does not guarantee the elimination of psychometric errors.

As was stated in the literature review section of this paper and based on the intern's experiences, there are five major types of psychometric errors that frequently occur in performance appraisals. They are halo, leniency, strictness, central tendency, and recency of events errors.

Halo error has been reported to be the most common amongst the five types of errors. Many attempts have been made to minimize or eliminate these errors by means of redesigning performance appraisal formats. Some of these appraisal formats are designed to be strictly objective in nature (such as Direct Index), or to be subjective in nature (such as the Narrative Essay). A major drawback of objective performance appraisals is that external factors, and unforeseen

circumstances, which may have a negative impact on performance, are not taken into consideration. On the other hand, a major drawback of subjective appraisals is that they are more prone to psychometric errors. Many of the appraisal formats are designed to control central tendency, leniency, and recency of events errors, but most often they control leniency errors. The type of psychometric error that is least controllable is halo error, hence it is the most pervasive. However, one type of appraisal instrument that is designed to control halo error is the graphic rating scale. Graphic rating scales can be classified as mixed standard scales, behavioral anchor scales, and behavioral observation scales. Graphic rating scales are the most widely used appraisal instruments in organizations because it is thought to be the best technique available in reducing psychometric errors. However, a review of the literature suggests that this is no longer the case. In fact, it has been found in a review of the literature that there is not one kind of appraisal format that can completely control the occurrence of psychometric errors. Hence, psychometric errors are still a problem in performance appraisal systems.

The review of the literature suggests that another approach is needed besides redesigning appraisal formats to minimize errors. The approach which has been widely accepted and discussed are rater training programs.

Rater training programs have three broad objectives:

1. To reduce or eliminate psychometric errors;

2. To improve the observational skills of raters by teaching them what to attend to;
3. To improve the ability of raters to communicate appraisal information in an objective, constructive manner.⁵¹

Traditionally, rater training has focused on teaching raters to eliminate psychometric errors such as leniency, central tendency, halo, and contrast effects. Now, rater training is also focusing on how to observe and record specific ratee behavior.⁵²

There are four main types of rater training programs: workshops, group discussions, training programs for the purpose of scale construction, and frame-of-reference training. Workshops and group discussions mainly focus on tactics of gathering information and sampling behaviors that are congruent with the performance behaviors. In addition, raters are trained on how to record and process information automatically according to the criteria established in the appraisal formats.⁵³ The use of videotaped examples of good, poor and satisfactory behaviors, along with rehearsal and feedback on the rater or trainee's success in diagnosing different levels of performance in the various performance categories is an effective form of training. Also, raters are trained on how to reach agreement with the ratee on the objective performance criteria, and also on how to

⁵¹Casio, Applied Psychology in Personnel Management, p. 99.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Gary P. Latham, Kenneth N. Wexley and Elliot D. Pursell, "Training Managers to Minimize Rating Errors in the Observation of Behavior," Journal of Applied Psychology 60 (October 1975):550.

make adjustments to such criteria whenever necessary.⁵⁴

Scale construction training is a type of training program whereby raters fully participate in constructing the scales that they will use later. Based on the limited empirical evidence, it appears that complete participation in scale construction may be effective in error reduction. The logic behind this thought is that the individual who can properly identify the types of errors on a test is more careful to avoid such errors when he/she is actually doing the rating. In other words, scale construction may lead to an increase in the understanding of scale use as well as job components. It has been highly accepted among raters.⁵⁵

Frame-of-reference training is designed to reduce arbitrary performance standards by having raters discuss their own standards in comparison with the normative standards. Through group solving techniques, the raters all agree on the standards and set new performance standards before going through the performance appraisal process. It has been found that frame-of-reference training produces more reliable performance evaluations.⁵⁶

The review of the literature suggests that rater training programs have been proven to be highly effective in minimizing errors.

⁵⁴Cynthia Lee, "Increasing Performance Appraisal Effectiveness: Matching Task Types, Appraisal Process, and Rater Training," The Academy of Management Review 10 (April 1985):328.

⁵⁵Dennis L. Warmke and Robert S. Billings, "Comparison of Training Methods for Improving the Psychometric Quality of Experimental and Administrative Performance Ratings," Journal of Applied Psychology 64 (February 1979):126.

⁵⁶Lee, "Increasing Performance Appraisal Effectiveness: Matching Task Types, Appraisal Process, and Rater Training," p. 323.

A study by Latham, Wexley and Pursell demonstrated the importance of training managers to observe behavior. It consisted of sixty managers in a large corporation who were randomly assigned to a workshop, a group discussion, and a control group. The workshop and group discussion involved training directed towards the elimination of rating errors that occur in performance appraisals. The findings showed that:

1. Trainees in the control group committed severity, recency-of-events, and halo errors.
2. Trainees in the workshop and group discussion committed no errors.⁵⁷

The significance of the study is that training programs which carefully apply basic principles of learning in accordance with the task being taught can eliminate more than one rating error committed by subjects from a different population. Also, this study showed that the results of the rater training program were sustained over time.

In further regards to rater training programs, there are two major concerns that will be briefly addressed: first, the concern over the types of psychometric errors that are minimized, and second, the effect of the length of training programs in the minimization of errors. In the first concern, some of the training programs appear successful at reducing certain types of errors (mainly halo and leniency errors). Yet, oftentimes only one or at best a few

⁵⁷ Latham, Wexley, and Pursell, "Training Managers to Minimize Rating Errors in the Observation of Behavior," p. 557.

psychometric errors are assessed.⁵⁸ In the second concern, a study was conducted which investigated the effects of long term versus a short term rater training session on the relative levels of leniency and halo errors. Results indicated that leniency and halo errors were significantly minimized more in the long term training than in short term training. However, the short term training did reduce the presence of psychometric errors to a certain degree.⁵⁹

The results of the studies reviewed here suggest that the type of appraisal format is not significantly important in reducing psychometric errors. However, emphasis should be placed on improving the inability of the rater to objectively evaluate performance. Training programs for appraisers are considered as the best approach to improving the quality and reliability of performance appraisals.

⁵⁸Bormon, "Format and Training Effects on Rating Accuracy and Rater Error," p. 411.

⁵⁹J. John Bernardin, "Effects of Rater Training on Leniency and Halo Errors in Student Ratings of Instructors," Journal of Applied Psychology 63 (June 1978):301.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, performance appraisal is the systematic description of an employee's strengths and weaknesses. Performance appraisals serve many purposes (i.e., promotion/demotion decisions, assigning rewards, establishing training programs, and providing feedback to the employee).

There are several types of appraisal formats which can be categorized as objective and subjective. Some are designed specifically to reduce psychometric errors. These psychometric errors are of five types: halo, leniency, strictness, central tendency, and recency-of-events errors. The examples given in the analysis section of this paper demonstrates that the occurrence of psychometric errors often are more a reflection of the rater than the appraisal format itself. In addition, they suggest that the design of the appraisal format does not guarantee the elimination of psychometric errors.

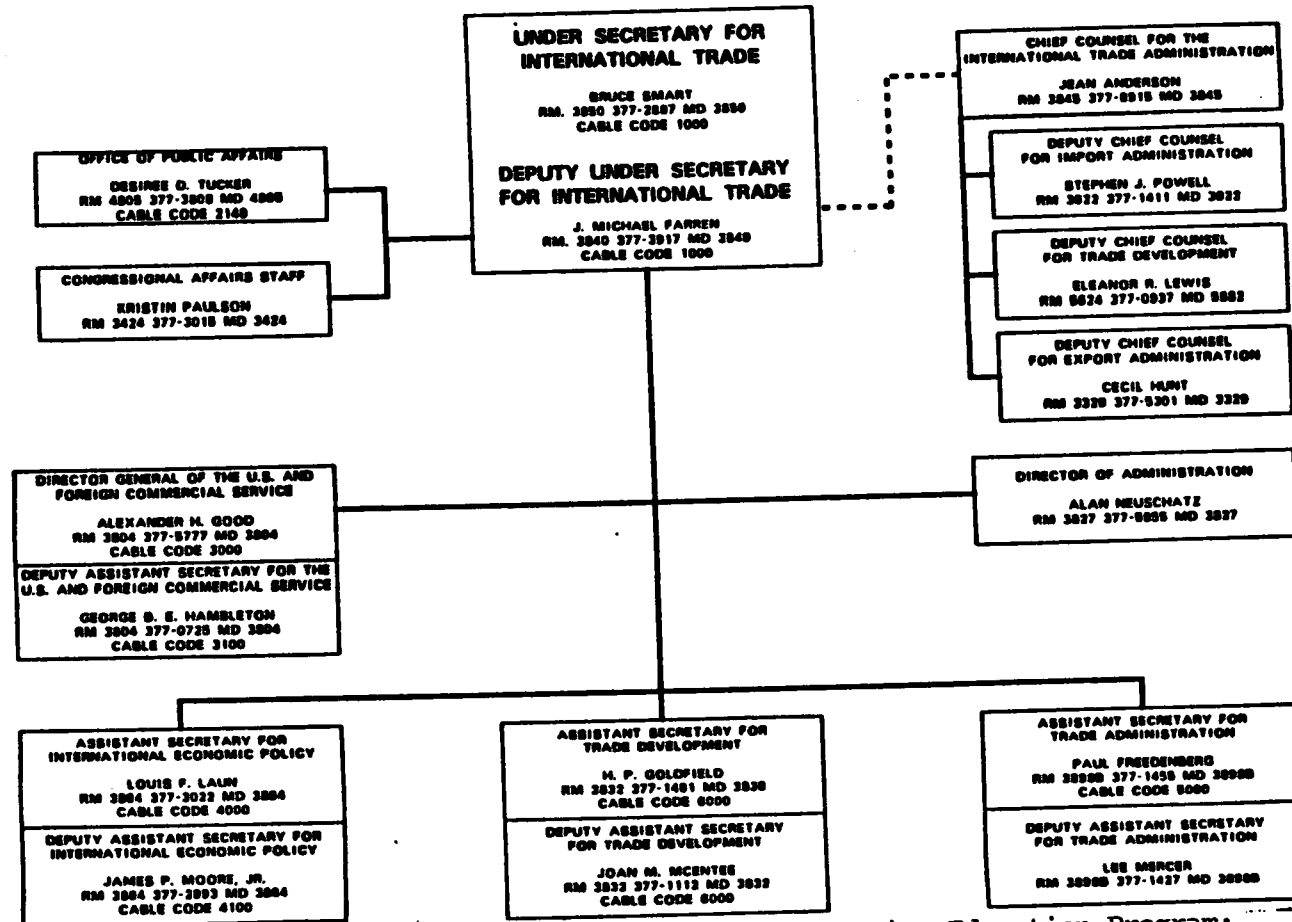
Consequently, other remedies are needed to control the occurrence of psychometric errors. One such method is rater training. The purpose of rater training is to teach raters how to observe and record ratee behavior in an effort to eliminate psychometric errors. There are four main types of rater training programs. These are workshops, group discussions, training programs for the purpose of scale construction, and frame-of-reference training. Studies in the Review of Literature

as well as in the Analysis sections of this paper suggest that rater training programs are effective in the reduction of psychometric errors. However, some training programs are more effective than others in minimizing errors. One can conclude that the effectiveness of rater training depends on the content, depth, and length of the training programs.

Based on the information gathered from the review of the literature and the analysis of that information, the writer strongly recommends the utilization of rater training in combination with the appropriate appraisal formats as a means of reducing psychometric errors.

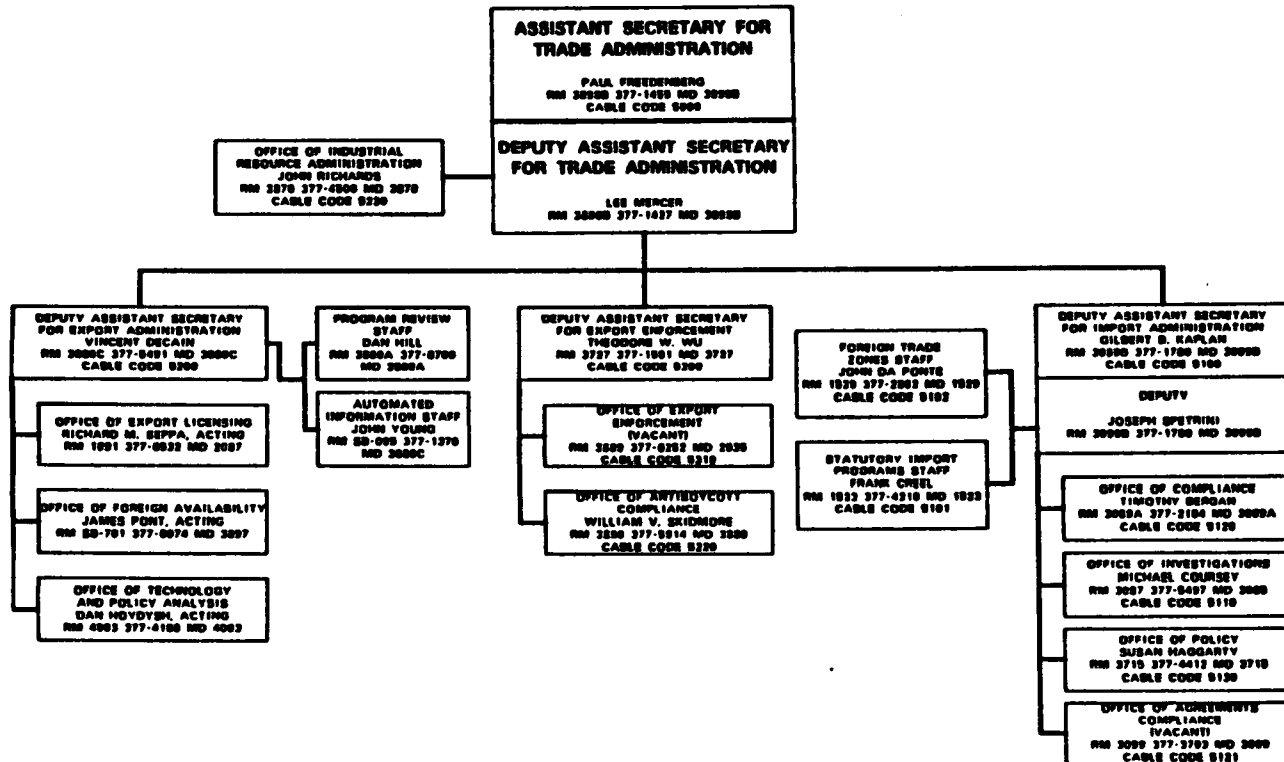
APPENDIX A
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE INTERNATIONAL
TRADE ADMINISTRATION

INTERNATIONAL TRADE ADMINISTRATION WORK REFERENCE CHART



Source: International Trade Administration, Cooperative Education Program:
Handbook for Co-op Students (February 1987): 4.

TRADE ADMINISTRATION



Source: International Trade Administration, Cooperative Education Program: Handbook for Co-op Students (February 1987): 3.

APPENDIX B

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PERFORMANCE PLAN
PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL RECORD**

OPM CO 306
REV. 6-85

U.S. Department of Commerce PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW & APPRAISAL RECORD

For Senior Executive Service,
Performance Management & Recognition System (PMRS),
and General Work Force Employees



THE FORM RECORDS:

- (1) an understanding between the rating official and employee of what is to be accomplished during the appraisal period;
- (2) how those accomplishments will be evaluated;
- (3) the employee's interim progress toward achieving the specified accomplishments;
- (4) the employee's actual accomplishments during the rating period; and
- (5) the final performance rating assigned the employee.

Name of Employee CHANDRA DANETTE WATKINS
 Position Title/Series/Grade INTERNATIONAL TRADE ADMINISTRATION COOP
 Organization ITA/EA/OEL/IVLD/REVIEW & REFERRAL BRANCH (RRB)
 Rating Period June 22, 1987 to December 22, 1987 (6-MONTH ASSIGNMENT)

Covered By: ☐ Senior Executive Service ☐ PMRS
☒ General Work Force

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND RECEIPT OF THE PERFORMANCE PLAN		
SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE (Indicates plan has been discussed)	SIGNATURE OF RATING OFFICIAL (Immediate Supervisor)	SIGNATURE OF APPROVING OFFICIAL or SES Appointing Authority
DATE <u>Chandra Watkins</u>	DATE <u>Cink</u>	DATE

SECTION II—PERFORMANCE SUMMARY AND RATING

Name: **CHANDRA DANETTE WATKINS** Date: **6/29/87**

Item 1. Instructions:

1. List each element from performance plan; indicate whether it is critical/non-critical and what weight has been assigned to it.
2. Assign a rating level for each element: (5) Outstanding (4) Commendable (3) Fully Successful (2) Marginal (1) Unsatisfactory
3. Score each element by multiplying the weight by the rating level.
4. After each element has been scored, compute total score by summing all individual scores. Total score can range from 100 to 500.

Performance Element	Critical or Non-critical (C or NC)	Being Tracked At Department Level	(Sum of Individual Weights must total 100)	Element Rating (1-5)	Score
1. Analyzes and prepares statistical status reports for management	C		30	4	120
2. Conducts two major studies related to the referral responsibilities (procedures/guidelines)	C		55	4	220
3. Complies with the operating procedures of ITA/OEL/IVLD/RRB	C		15	5	75

Item 2. Recommended Summary Rating (Check appropriate rating based on total score received.)

- ☐ Outstanding (461-500)
 ☒ Commendable (380-460)
 ☐ Fully Successful (290-379)
 ☐ Marginal (200-289)
 ☐ Unsatisfactory—Must be assigned if employee is given an unsatisfactory rating on one or more critical element(s)

TOTAL SCORE
(100-500)

415

Employee comments attached: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Employee requested higher level review: ☐ Yes ☐ No (For SES employees only) (If yes, see 3.c.2 on reverse.)

Supervisor's Signature

Date

Employee's Signature

Date

Intermediate Supervisor (Optional)

Date

Item 3a. General Work Force Employees Only:

If rating official wishes to recommend consideration for a performance award or quality step increase at this time, complete CD-326 and attach.

Item 3b. PMRS Only:

If total score is at least 475, and if rating official wishes to recommend a performance award of 10-20% of base pay, complete CD-326 and attach.

Item 3c. SES Employees Only. See Reverse Side.

Item 4. Final Summary Rating (General Work Force and PMRS Employees. See Item 3c.4 on reverse for SES Employees.) Note: If approving official changes summary rating, he/she must document reasons on the appropriate element rating(s), (CD-396A, Item 5a.).

- ☐ Outstanding
 ☐ Commendable
 ☐ Fully Successful
 ☐ Marginal
 ☐ Unsatisfactory

Approving Official Signature

Date

SECTION I—PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL RECORD

Name CHANDRA DANETTE WATKINS	Date 6/29/87	Sheet No 1 of 3
Item 1: Performance Element and Objective (Identify as Critical or Non-critical, and if it is being tracked at the Departmental level.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Critical <input type="checkbox"/> Being Tracked At Departmental Level (Specify Initiative or Project) ELEMENT: ANALYZES AND PREPARES STATISTICAL/STATUS REPORTS FOR MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE: TO ASSIST THE BRANCH CHIEF/DOD TEAM COORDINATOR MANAGE THE REFERRAL FUNCTIONS Weighting Factor (Weights reflect the level of importance and/or amount of time devoted to accomplishing the element. Weight for performance plans must total 100. Enter weight for this element in the adjacent block.)		
		30

Item 2: Major Activities (Identify activities or results that need to be accomplished in support of the performance element.)

1. Reviews computer reports on export licenses for accuracy and inconsistencies.
2. Develops and drafts summary/status reports and/or statistical reports.
3. Drafts memorandum to management and other government agencies on matters pertaining to the Review & Referral Branch operations. Such assignments may be initiated from the Branch Chief or the DOD Team Coordinator.
4. Ensure that all issues/attachments are addressed in the review and/or analysis process.
5. Assist to analyze trends and evolving needs in referral procedures vis-a-vis Export Administration policies. Recommend adjustments in export administration procedures such as the elimination or clarification of troublesome procedures or the introduction of new requirements/procedures which might achieve the objectives of the Office of Export Licensing.
6. Demonstrate flexibility, initiative and creativity in reviewing, resolving systemic problems and creating new procedures.
7. Assist in troubleshooting; new systems and controls are examined and/or designed and must imports are implemented to ensure quality control in coordinating referrals.

8. Assist in preparing any other special/analytical reports as required.

Item 3: Criteria for Evaluation (In addition to using the qualitative generic performance standards printed on the next to the last page of this form, indicate how each element is to be evaluated in terms of quantity, timeliness, and/or cost-effectiveness.)

- o Regulatory/Procedural Expertise - All reviews and analyses are comprehensive and accurate. All actions are appropriate in relation to referral guidelines and internal policy.
- o Problem Solving - Deals effectively with common referral problems. Consults with the Branch Chief and/or appropriate Team Leaders including agency personnel on matters relating to specific projects.
- o Coordination - Work closely with the Branch Chief and DOD Team Coordinator to complete all tasks.
- o Time Management/Outstanding - All duties are prioritized and managed/completed accordingly.

Employee's Signature <i>Chandra Watkins</i>	Date 12/18/87
Supervisor's Signature <i>[Signature]</i>	Date 12/18/87

Item 4. Progress Reviews (Indicate progress toward accomplishing this element, the need for any adjustments to the plan, or areas where performance needs to be improved.)

Employee's Initials	Date	Employee's Initials	Date
Supervisor's Initials	Date	Supervisor's Initials	Date

Item 5. Achievement Level & Justification (Substantiate the level of achievement.)

5-Outstanding 4-Commendable 3-Fully Successful 2-Marginal 1-Unsatisfactory

Enter Achievement
Level 1-5
in adjacent block

4

Chandra has performed this element at the commendable level. As required she has been able to provide timely & accurate reports to R&D management which have given extremely helpful information in the management of a complicated production process.

and

SECTION I—PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL RECORD

Name CHANDRA DANETTE WATKINS	Date 6/29/87	Sheet No. 2 of 3
--	------------------------	----------------------------

Item 1: Performance Element and Objective (Identify as Critical or Non-critical, and if it is being tracked at the Departmental level.)

☒ Critical ☐ Non-Critical ☐ Being Tracked At Departmental Level (Specify Initiative or Project)

ELEMENT: CONDUCTS TWO MAJOR STUDIES RELATED TO THE REFERRAL RESPONSIBILITIES

OBJECTIVE: TO ENSURE THAT ALL REFERRALS ARE BEING PROCESSED ACCORDING TO

NATIONAL SECURITY, FOREIGN POLICY, AND NON-PROLIFERATION POLICIES

Weighting Factor (Weights reflect the level of importance and/or amount of time devoted to accomplishing the element.)

Weight for performance plans must total 100. Enter weight for this element in the adjacent block.)

55

Item 2: Major Activities (Identify activities or results that need to be accomplished in support of the performance element.)

1. Assist in preparing a study on the level/quality of technical review currently provided by the technical staff in the Individual Validated Licensing Division (IVLD). This study will identify problems as well as solutions as to the reason(s) (perception) why DOC has poor quality technical review. This study will take into consideration current licensing requirements and the needs of other agencies who also review all Department of Commerce's technical position on referred export applications.
2. Assist in preparing procedural guidelines for the upcoming electronic transmittal project.
3. Participate in meetings related to the above projects.

Item 3: Criteria for Evaluation (In addition to using the qualitative generic performance standards printed on the next to the last page of this form, indicate how each element is to be evaluated in terms of quantity, timeliness, and/or cost-effectiveness.)

- o Interpretation - Makes accurate interpretation of regulations/procedures and policies; obtains clarification from appropriate the Branch Chief and/or ICD Team Coordinator when regulations or policies are ambiguous.
- o Participation - Actively participates in all meetings; provide guidance as needed and makes suggestions.
- o Submission - The final product will be in writing in the form of reports. All reports must present solutions to problems which affects the referral program.
- o Creativity - Demonstrates initiative and creativity in resolving problems/issues in accomplishing the objectives set forth by the Branch Chief and/or the ICD Team Coordinator.

Employee's Signature <i>Chandra Watkins</i>	Date 12/18/87
Supervisor's Signature <i>[Signature]</i>	Date

Gladwin was only able to participate in some of the
 these major activities of the demand due to constraints
 in the development of the underlying electronic

SECTION I—PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL RECORD

Name	Date	Sheet No.
CHANDRA DANETTE MATRINS	6/29/87	1 of 1

Item 1. Performance Element and Objective (Identify as Critical or Non-critical, and if it is being tracked at the Departmental level.)

☒ Critical ☐ Non-Critical ☐ Being Tracked At Departmental Level (Specify Initiative or Project)

Element: COMPLIES WITH THE OPERATING PROCEDURES OF ITA/OEL/IVLD/RRB

Objective: IMPLEMENT DAILY ESTABLISHED RULES AND PROCEDURES/REGULATIONS

Weighting Factor (Weights reflect the level of importance and/or amount of time devoted to accomplishing the element. Weight for performance plans must total 100. Enter weight for this element in the adjacent block.)

15

Item 2. Major Activities (Identify activities or results that need to be accomplished in support of the performance element.)

As part of the Review & Referral Branch (6-month intern assignment), implement operating guidelines into daily activities. The following expectations, relations with the exporting community, administrative requirements, and operating standard are included in the IVLD Director's Guidelines memorandum dated February 12, 1986:

Courtesy in Dealing with the Public (Export Community)
 Conflict of Interest and Favoritism
 Time, Attendance and Whereabouts
 Record Keeping
 Security
 Government Equipment and Facilities
 Overtime
 Telephone Coverage
 Division's communications, appearance
 Lending a Helping Hand
 Training - Career Development

Item 3. Criteria for Evaluation (Use the generic performance standards printed in Appendix A. Supplemental performance standards may also be specified below.)

- o Professionalism - Maintain excellent professional work habits at all times in IVLD/Review & Referral Branch.

Employee shows great interest in her work; excels in learning, acquiring and applying new knowledge and generally being helpful so that the Review & Referral Branch can meet its mandate.

Optional Initial Block

Emp.	Date	Supv.	Date
CDM	6/29/87	Mum	6/29/87

Item 4 Progress Reviews (Indicate progress toward accomplishing this element, the need for any adjustments to the plan, or areas where performance needs to be improved.)

Employee's Initials	Date	Employee's Initials	Date
Supervisor's Initials	Date	Supervisor's Initials	Date

Item 5 Achievement Level & Justification (Substantiate the level of achievement.)

5-Outstanding 4-Commendable 3-Fully Successful 2-Marginal 1-Unsatisfactory

Enter Achievement
Level 1-5
in adjacent block

5

Chandra was very conscientious in the area. She took the time to familiarize herself with all of the operational procedures and took instruction in this area well.

Chandra



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Export Administration
Washington, D.C. 20230

17 DEC 1987

MEMORANDUM TO Helene Arrons
Director
Cooperative Intern
FROM: LaVerne N. Smith *LNS*
Branch Chief
Exporter Assistance Staff
SUBJECT: Evaluation of Co-op student Chandra Watkins

Chandra Watkin has been with the Exporter Assistance Staff for a very short time of 5 weeks. During her stay with us she has performed the duties of Export Administration Specialist. These duties consist of providing status of pending export license applications and interpreting the Export Administration Regulations.

During the short time that Chandra has been with the Exporter Assistance Staff. She has performed her duties commendably. She has taken on all assignments given to her and performed them timely and accurately. I would love for Chandra to take a permanent position with my staff. She has an outstanding personality and an ability to communicate with all levels of personnel in EA and industry. She has a quality of professionalism that I don't see too often.

MS. CHANDRA WATKINS

MID-TERM REVIEW

During the first three months, Ms. Watkins has been fully involved in a study to upgrade the technical review provided currently by the technical staff in the Department. This study is somewhat complex in nature. It requires a general understanding of the Export Administration Regulations, interagency referral procedures and overall a good understanding of administrative guidelines.

Ms. Watkins has been "plugging away" and absorbing information as much as she can. She seems to find this task challenging since it is testing her abilities to: conceptualize, bring together loose ideas and present them in a clear, concise, no-nonsense writing, and test her imagination. In addition, in preparing this report she must be able to be a good coordinator and communicator since she has to interact with different levels of management and be able to articulate clearly the purpose of the study to those from whom she wishes to acquire some input.

While we do not have a final product yet, the report is coming along slowly. I have had to supervise her very closely because her knowledge and understanding of the Export Regulation is still limited. At the end of her six months, I will appraise her for her overall industriousness, efforts, diligence and persistence that she has put into the project. I expect a first draft by November 13, 1987 and a final product by December 4, 1987. In addition, I will also measure her creativity on the final recommendations.

With regards to the second project, Ms. Watkins has not been involved in drafting the guidelines for the upcoming electronic transmission of export applications to the Departments of Energy and State. However, she will be involved in the upcoming weeks.

Overall, Ms. Watkins has shown willingness to assume new and additional responsibilities when necessary despite an indifference towards those projects which do not draw upon her immediate education/experience. However, she needs to be more inquisitive and ask more questions. If she were to do so, I believe that she would then be able to demonstrate more initiative and creativity in resolving problems/ongoing issues.

Additionally, as the study begins to approach the final draft phase, Ms. Watkins should receive more supervision and guidance from the Branch Chief, Mr. Charles Guernieri. Thus, Mr. Guernieri will also participate in Ms. Watkins final evaluation.

SIGNATURE:

Chandra Watkins

Date:

Date:

Marlene V. Urdina

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